



**An association of resources and advocacy for children, youth and families**  
[www.aspiremn.org](http://www.aspiremn.org)

February 8, 2023

Dear Chair Youakim and Members of the House Education Finance Committee,

AspireMN is grateful for your leadership on HF795 to support children who are accessing care in a residential or day treatment environment to have the opportunity to participate in school through extended school time supports.

As a statewide association of children and family serving organizations, AspireMN members operate in deep partnership with educators across Minnesota and engage collaboratively around the goals of supporting student mental health and educational growth. Supporting a child, their family and community with a focus on future successes requires actively supporting educational achievement.

Expert mental health treatment providers often lament the lack of continuous access to educational opportunities for children while in intensive mental health settings, as the structure and support of mental health treatment settings create unique and important opportunities for children to catch up on their education. Young people who require residential and day treatment have often fallen behind in meeting educational milestones due to the need to attend to pressing mental health needs. While participating in intensive mental health treatment, students are in relationship with supportive staff who can encourage engagement in learning and related school activities – while supported by a professional educator.

We are grateful for the attention this committee has invested in student mental health. We look forward to continued opportunities to partner and collaborate with educators across Minnesota who are striving to support students experience success in education.

Please include this foundationally important proposal – to support children with intensive mental health needs access to extended school time opportunities – as one of your 2023 priorities.

Gratefully,

Kirsten Anderson  
Executive Director

**AspireMN improves the lives of children, youth and families served by member organizations through support for quality service delivery, leadership development and policy advocacy.**